NASA's Sixth Annual Robotic Mining Competition

Rules & Rubrics 2015

Kennedy Space Center, Florida

Introduction

NASA's Sixth Annual NASA Robotic Mining Competition is for university-level students to design and build a mining robot that can traverse the simulated Martian chaotic terrain, excavate Martian regolith and deposit the regolith into a Collector Bin within 10 minutes. There is particular relevance to NASA's mission of pioneering a human presence on Mars through resource mining and utilization. A critical resource on Mars is water ice which can be found buried in the regolith where it is well insulated. The technology concepts developed by the university teams for this competition conceivably could be used to robotically mine regolith resources on Mars. NASA will directly benefit from the competition by encouraging the development of innovative robotic excavation concepts from universities which may result in clever ideas and solutions which could be applied to an actual excavation device or payload. The unique physical properties of basaltic regolith and the reduced 3/8th of Earth gravity make excavation a difficult technical challenge. Advances in Martian mining have the potential to significantly contribute to our nation's space vision and NASA space exploration operations.

The complexities of the challenge include the abrasive characteristics of the basaltic regolith simulant, the weight and size limitations of the mining robot, and the ability to tele-operate it from a remote mission control center. The scoring for the mining category will require teams to consider a number of design and operation factors such as dust tolerance and dust projection, communications, vehicle mass, energy/power required, and autonomy.

The competition will be conducted by NASA at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. The teams that can use telerobotic or autonomous operation to excavate the basaltic regolith simulant, called Black Point-1 or BP-1, and score the most points wins the Joe Kosmo Award for Excellence. The team will receive the Joe Kosmo Award for Excellence trophy, KSC launch invitations, team certificates for each member, and a $5,000 team scholarship. Awards for other categories include monetary team scholarships, a school trophy or plaque, team and individual certificates, and KSC launch invitations.

Undergraduate and graduate student teams enrolled in a U.S. college or university are eligible to enter the Robotic Mining Competition. Design teams must include: at least one faculty with a college or university and at least two undergraduate or graduate students. NASA has not set an upper limit on team members. A team should have a sufficient number of members to successfully operate their mining robot. Teams will compete in up to five major competition categories including: on-site mining, systems engineering paper, outreach project, slide presentation and demonstration (optional), and team spirit (optional).

The NASA Robotic Mining Competition is a student competition that will be conducted in a positive, professional way. This is a reminder to be courteous in all your correspondence and all interactions on-site at the competition. Unprofessional behavior or unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated and will be grounds for disqualification. The frequently asked questions (FAQ) document is updated regularly and is considered part of this document. It is the responsibility of the teams to read, understand, and abide by all of NASA's Sixth Annual Robotic Mining Competition Rules and Rubrics, stay updated with new FAQs, communicate with NASA's representatives, and complete all surveys. These rules and rubrics are subject to future updates by NASA at its sole discretion.

For more information, visit the NASA Robotic Mining Competition on the Web at http://www.nasa.gov/nasarmc and follow the NASA Robotic Mining Competition on Twitter at https://twitter.com/NASARMC.

On-Site Mining Category Rules

The scoring for the Mining Category will require teams to consider a number of design and operation factors such as dust tolerance and projection, communications, vehicle mass, energy/power required, and autonomy. Each team must compete on-site at the Kennedy Space Center, Florida on May 18-22, 2015. A minimum amount of 10kg of BP-1 and/or icy regolith simulant (gravel) must be mined and deposited during either of two competition attempts according to the rules to qualify to win in this category. If the minimum amount of 10kg of BP-1 and/or icy regolith simulant (gravel) is not met for an attempt, then the total score for that attempt will be 0. In the case of a tie, the teams will compete in a tie-breaking competition attempt. The judges' decisions are final in all disputes. The teams with the first, second, and third most mining points averaged from both attempts will receive team plaques, individual team certificates, KSC launch invitations, $3,000, $2,000, and $1,000 scholarships and 25, 20, and 15 points toward the Joe Kosmo Award for Excellence, respectively. Teams not winning first, second, or third place in the mining category can earn one bonus point for each kilogram of BP-1 and/or icy regolith simulant (gravel) mined and deposited up to a maximum average of ten points toward the Joe Kosmo Award for Excellence. The most innovative design will receive the Judges' Innovation Award at the discretion of the mining judges.

1) Teams must arrive at the Robotic Mining Competition Check-In Tent in Parking Lot 4 of the Kennedy Space Center no later than 3:00 p.m. on Monday, May 18, 2015; but teams are encouraged to arrive earlier.

2) Teams will be required to perform two official competition attempts using BP-1 in the Caterpillar Mining Arena. NASA will fill the Caterpillar Mining Arena with compacted BP-1 that approximates basaltic Martian regolith. The mining area will contain BP-1 regolith simulant up to a depth of approximately 30 cm. Below the BP-1 there will be approximately 30 cm depth of gravel with a mean particle size diameter of ~ 2 cm which simulates icy regolith buried in the Martian regolith. Larger rocks may also be mixed in with the gravel and BP-1 in a random manner. Note that gravel may be mixed in with the BP-1, but the bulk of it will be in the bottom 30 cm of the mining area only. NASA will randomly place three obstacles and create two craters on each side of the Caterpillar Mining Arena. Each competition attempt will occur with two teams competing at the same time, one on each side of the Caterpillar Mining Arena. After each competition attempt, the gravel will be returned to the lower 30 cm of the mining area and the BP-1 will be returned to the top 30 cm in a compacted state, and the obstacles and craters will be re-set in the Caterpillar Mining Arena. The order of teams for the competition attempts will be chosen at NASA's discretion. See Diagrams 1 and 2.

3) In each of the two official competition attempts, the teams will score cumulative Mining Points. See Table 1 for the Mining Category Scoring Example. The teams' ranking Mining Points will be the average of their two competition attempts.

   A) Each team will be awarded 1000 Mining points after passing the safety inspection and communications check.

   B) During each competition attempt, the team will earn 3 Mining points for each kilogram in excess of 10 kg of BP-1 deposited in the Collector Bin. (For example, 110 kg of BP-1 mined will earn 300 Mining points.)

   C) During each competition attempt, the team will earn 6 Mining points for each kilogram of simulated icy regolith (gravel) deposited in the Collector Bin. The gravel will be sieved out at the Collector Bin and weighed separately from the BP-1.

   D) During each competition attempt, the team will lose 1 Mining Point for each 50 kilobits/second (kb/sec) of average data used throughout each competition attempt.

   E) During each competition attempt, the team will lose 8 Mining points for each kilogram of total mining robot mass. (For example, a mining robot that weighs 80 kg will lose 640 Mining points.)

   F) During each competition attempt, the team will lose 1 Mining point for each watt-hour of energy consumed. The electrical energy consumed must be displayed by an electronic data logger and verified by a judge.

G) During each competition attempt, the judges will award the team 0 to 100 Mining points for dust tolerant design features on the mining robot (up to 30 Mining points) and dust free operation (up to 70 Mining points). If the mining robot has exposed mechanisms where dust could accumulate during a Martian mission and degrade the performance or lifetime of the mechanisms, then fewer Mining points will be awarded in this category. If the mining robot raises a substantial amount of airborne dust or projects it due to its operations, then fewer Mining points will be awarded. Ideally, the mining robot will operate in a clean manner without dust projection, and all mechanisms and moving parts will be protected from dust intrusion. The mining robot will not be penalized for airborne dust while dumping into the Collector Bin. All decisions by the judges regarding dust tolerance and dust projection are final.

The 30 points for dust-tolerant design will be broken down in the following way:

1. Drive train components enclosed/protected and other component selection – 10 points
2. Custom dust sealing features (bellows, seals, etc.) –10 points
3. Active dust control (brushing, electrostatics, etc.) – 10 points

The 70 points for dust-free operation will be broken down in the following way:

1. Driving without dusting up crushed basalt – 20 points
2. Digging without dusting up crushed basalt – 30 points
3. Transferring crushed basalt without dumping the crushed basalt on your own Robot – 20 points

H) During each competition attempt, the team will earn up to 500 Mining points for autonomous operations. Mining points will be awarded for successfully completing the following activities autonomously:

1. Successfully crossing the obstacle field: 50 pts (two times only – outbound and back)
2. Successfully crossing the obstacle field, excavating and returning to the collection bin: 150 pts
3. Successfully crossing the obstacle field, excavating and depositing regolith, 2 times: 250 pts
4. Successful fully autonomous run for 10 minutes: 500 pts

The points earned for autonomy are not cumulative. Levels 1 through 4 points will be incrementally achieved. For example if level 2 is achieved then the points for level 1 are not counted. The autonomy points are awarded for the whole competition attempt and not for each run across the obstacle zone. If the robot fails to achieve autonomy during the competition attempt, and manual control is regained, then only autonomy points achieved to that point in time will be allowed.

For a team to earn mining points in the autonomous category, the team cannot touch the controls during the autonomous period. If the team touches the controls then the autonomy period for that run is over; however, the team may revert to manual control to complete that run. Start and stop commands are allowed at the beginning and end of the autonomous period. Orientation data cannot be transmitted to the mining robot in the autonomous period. Telemetry to monitor the health of the mining robot is allowed during the autonomous period. The mining robot must continue to operate for the entire 10 minutes to qualify for a fully autonomous run.

The walls of the Caterpillar Mining Arena cannot be used for sensing by the robot to achieve autonomy. The team must explain to the inspection judges how their autonomous systems work and prove that the autonomy sensors do not use the walls. There are no walls on Mars and the teams are expected to operate as closely as possible to a Mars scenario of operations. Honesty will be expected from all team members and their faculty coaches. Failure to clearly divulge the method of autonomy sensing will result in disqualification from the competition.

The teams with the first, second, and third most Autonomous points averaged from both attempts will receive the Caterpillar Autonomy Award and $1,500, $750, and $250 team scholarships respectively. Points will count toward the Caterpillar Autonomy Award even if no regolith is deposited. In the case

of a tie, the team that deposits the most regolith will win. If no regolith deposited in the case of a tie, the judges will choose the winner. The judges' decision is final.

Mining Category Elements	Specific Points	Actual	Units	Mining points
Pass Inspections	0 or 1000	1		1000
BP-1 over 10 kg	+3/kg	110	kg	+300
Gravel (Icy Regolith Simulant)	+6/kg	10	kg	+60
Average Bandwidth	-1/50kb/sec	5000	kb/sec	-100
Mining Robot Mass	-8/kg	80	kg	-640
Report Energy Consumed	-1/Watt-hour	-35	Watt-hour	-35
Dust Tolerant Design (30%) & Dust Free Operation (70%)	0 to +100	70		+70
Autonomy	50, 150, 250 or 500	150		+150
Total				805

Table 1: Mining Category Scoring Example

4) All excavated mass deposited in the Collector Bin during each official competition attempt will be weighed after the completion of each competition attempt. All gravel will be sieved out from the BP-1 at the collector bin and weighed separately.

5) The mining robot will be placed in the randomly selected starting positions. See Diagrams 1 and 2.

6) A team's mining robot may only excavate BP-1 and gravel located in that team's respective mining area at the opposite end of the Caterpillar Mining Arena from the team's starting area. The team's starting direction will be randomly selected immediately before the competition attempt. Mining is allowed as soon as the mining line is crossed by the front end of the robot.

7) The mining robot is required to move across the obstacle area to the mining area and then move back to the Collector Bin to deposit the BP-1 and gravel into the Collector Bin. See Diagrams 1 and 2.

8) Each team is responsible for placement and removal of their mining robot onto the BP-1 surface. There must be one person per 23 kg of mass of the mining robot, requiring four people to carry the maximum allowed mass. Assistance will be provided if needed.

9) Each team is allotted a maximum of 10 minutes to place the mining robot in its designated starting position within the Caterpillar Mining Arena and 5 minutes to remove the mining robot from the Caterpillar Mining Arena after the 10-minute competition attempt has concluded.

10) The mining robot operates during the 10-minute time limit of each competition attempt. The competition attempts for both teams in the Caterpillar Mining Arena will begin and end at the same time.

11) The mining robot will end operation immediately when the power-off command is sent, as instructed by the competition judges.

12) The mining robot cannot be anchored to the BP-1 surface prior to the beginning of each competition attempt.

13) The mining robot will be inspected during the practice days and right before each competition attempt. Teams will be permitted to repair or otherwise modify their mining robots anytime the Pits are open.

14) At the start of each competition attempt, the mining robot may not occupy any location outside the defined starting position in the Caterpillar Mining Arena. See Caterpillar Mining Arena definition for description of the competition field.

15) The Collector Bin top edge will be placed so that it is adjacent to the side walls of the Caterpillar Mining Arena without a gap and the height will be approximately 0.5 meter +/- 0.2 m from the top of the BP-1 surface directly below it. The Collector bin top opening will be 1.65 meters long and .48 meters wide. The

Collector bin will include a gravel sieve screen suspended above the existing bin. See Diagram 3. This sieve screen frame will have the same opening dimensions and internal slope angles as the bin but will be suspended above it. This effectively raises the lip of the collector bin by 3.8 cm. The Collector bin sieve top opening dimensions are 1.575 m long by 0.457 m deep with the same slope angles and the bin below of 44 degrees long side and 51 degrees and the ends. The sieve screen is 6.4 cm below the frame lip. See Diagrams 1 – 3. A target(s) or beacon(s) may be attached to the Collector Bin for navigation purposes only. This navigational aid system must be attached during the setup time and removed afterwards during the removal time period. If attached to the Collector Bin, it must not exceed the width of the Collector Bin and it must not weigh over 9 kg. The navigational aid system may not be higher than 0.25 m above the Collector Bin, and cannot be permanently attached or cause alterations (ie. no drilling, nails, etc). The mass of the navigational aid system is included in the maximum mining robot mass limit of 80.0 kg and must be self-powered. The target/beacon may send a signal or light beam but lasers are not allowed for safety reasons except for Visible Class I or II lasers or low power lasers and laser based detection systems. Supporting documentation from the laser instrumentation vendor must be given to the inspection judge for "eye-safe" lasers. The Judges will inspect and verify that all laser devices are a class I or II product and they have not been modified (optics or power).

16) There will be three obstacles placed on top of the compressed BP-1 surface within the obstacle area before each competition attempt is made. The placement of the obstacles will be randomly selected before the start of the competition. Each obstacle will have a diameter of approximately 10 to 30 cm and an approximate mass of 3 to 10 kg. There will be two craters of varying depth and width, being no wider or deeper than 30 cm. No obstacles will be intentionally buried in the BP-1 by NASA, however, BP-1 includes naturally occurring rocks.

17) The mining robot must operate within the Caterpillar Mining Arena: it is not permitted to pass beyond the confines of the outside wall of the Caterpillar Mining Arena and the Collector bin during each competition attempt. The BP-1 and/or gravel must be mined in the mining area and deposited in the Collector bin. A team that excavates any BP-1 from the starting or obstacle areas will be disqualified. The BP-1 and/or gravel must be carried from the mining area to the Collector bin by any means and be deposited in the Collector bin in its raw state. A secondary container like a bag or box may not be deposited inside the Collector bin. Depositing a container in the Collector bin will result in disqualification of the team. The mining robot can separate intentionally, if desired, but all parts of the mining robot must be under the team's control at all times. Any ramming of the wall may result in a safety disqualification at the discretion of the judges. The walls may not be used for the purposes of mapping autonomous navigation and collision avoidance. Touching or having a switch sensor springwire that may brush on a wall as a collision avoidance sensor is not allowed.

18) The mining robot must not use the wall as support or push/scoop BP-1 and/or gravel up against the wall to accumulate BP-1. If the mining robot exposes the Caterpillar Mining Arena bottom due to excavation, touching the bottom is permitted, but contact with the Caterpillar Mining Arena bottom or walls cannot be used at any time as a required support to the mining robot. Teams should be prepared for airborne dust raised by either team during each competition attempt.

19) During each competition attempt, the mining robot is limited to autonomous and telerobotic operations only. No physical access to the mining robot will be allowed during each competition attempt. In addition, telerobotic operators are only allowed to use data and video originating from the mining robot and the NASA video monitors. Visual and auditory isolation of the telerobotic operators from the mining robot in the Mission Control Center is required during each competition attempt. Telerobotic operators will be able to observe the Caterpillar Mining Arena through overhead cameras in the Caterpillar Mining Arena via monitors that will be provided by NASA in the Mission Control Center. These color monitors should be used for situational awareness only. No other outside communication via cell phones, radios, other team members, etc. is allowed in the Mission Control Center once each competition attempt begins. During the 10 minute setup period, a handheld radio link will be provided between the Mission Control Center team members and team members setting up the mining robot in the Caterpillar Mining Arena to facilitate voice communications during the setup phase only.

20) The mining robot mass is limited to a maximum of 80.0 kg. Subsystems on the mining robot used to transmit commands/data and video to the telerobotic operators are counted toward the 80.0 kg mass limit.

Equipment not on the mining robot used to receive data from and send commands to the mining robot for telerobotic operations is excluded from the 80.0 kg mass limit.

21) The mining robot must provide its own onboard power. No facility power will be provided to the mining robot. There are no power limitations except that the mining robot must be self-powered and included in the maximum mining robot mass limit of 80.0 kg. The energy consumed must be recorded with an electronic data logger device. Actual energy consumed during each competition run must be shown to the judges on the data logger immediately after the competition attempt

22) The mining robot must be equipped with an easily accessible red emergency stop button (kill switch) of minimum diameter of 40 mm on the surface of the mining robot requiring no steps to access. The emergency stop button must stop the mining robot's motion and disable all power to the mining robot with one push motion on the button. It must be highly reliable and instantaneous. For these reasons an unmodified "Commercial Off-The-Shelf" (COTS) red button is required. A closed control signal to a mechanical relay is allowed as long as it stays open to disable the mining robot. The reason for this rule is to completely safe the mining robot in the event of a fire or other mishap. The button should disconnect the batteries from all controllers (high current, forklift type button) and it should isolate the batteries from the rest of the active sub-systems as well. Only laptop computers may stay powered on if powered by its internal battery.

23) The communications rules for telerobotic operations follow.

A. MINING ROBOT WIRELESS SYSTEMS REQUIREMENTS

1. Each team is required to command and monitor their mining robot over the NASA-provided network infrastructure shown in Figure 1.

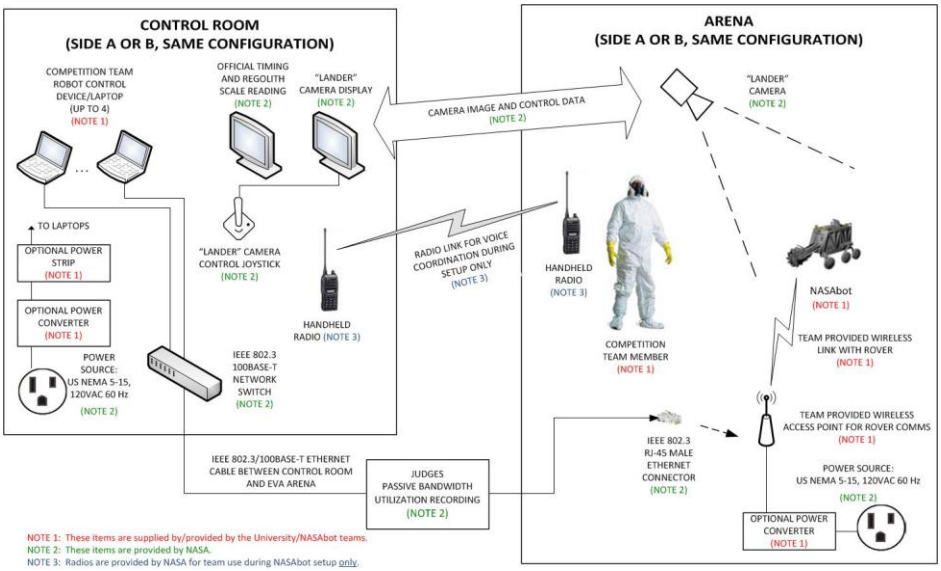
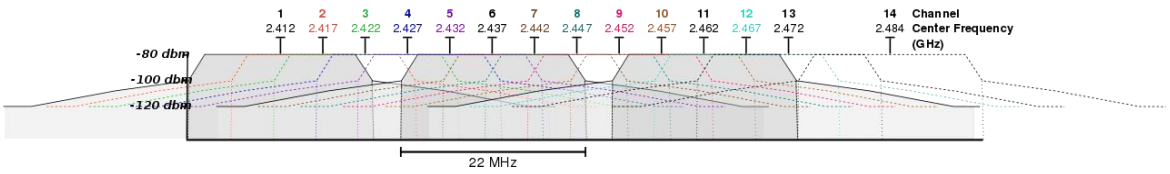


Figure 1: NASA Provided Network

a. This configuration must be used for teams to communicate with their mining robot.
b. The "Mars Lander" camera is staged in the Caterpillar Mining Arena, and Mars Lander Control Joystick and camera display will be located with the team in the Mission Control Center (MCC)
c. The MCC will have an official timing display, which includes a real-time display of BP-1 collected during the match
d. Handheld radios will be provided to each team to link their Mission Control Center team members with their corresponding team members in the Caterpillar Mining Arena during setup.

2. Each team will provide the wireless link (access point, bridge, or wireless device) to their mining robot, which means that each team will bring their own Wi-Fi equipment/router and any required power conversion devices. Teams must set their own network IP addresses to enable communication between their mining robot and their control computers, through their own wireless link hosted in the Caterpillar Mining Arena.
    a. In the Caterpillar Mining Arena, NASA will provide an elevated network drop (male RJ-45 Ethernet plug) that extends to the Mission Control Center, where NASA will provide a network switch for the teams to plug in their laptops.
    b. The network drop in the Caterpillar Mining Arena will be elevated high enough above the edge of the regolith bed wall to provide adequate radio frequency visibility of the Caterpillar Mining Arena.
    c. A shelf will be set up next to the network drop at a height 0 to 2 feet above the walls of the Arena, and will be placed in a corner area on the same side as the collection bin. During robot system operations during the competition, there may be some dust accumulation in this area. This shelf is where teams will place their Wireless Access Point (WAP) to communicate with their mining robot.
    d. Teams are STRONGLY encouraged to develop a dust protection cover for their wireless access point (WAP) that does not interfere with the radiofrequency signal performance.
    e. The WAP shelves for side A and side B of the Caterpillar Mining Arena will be at least 25 feet apart to prevent electromagnetic interference (EMI) between the units.
3. Power interfaces:
    a. NASA will provide a standard US National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA) 5-15 type, 110 VAC, 60 Hz electrical jack by the network drop. This will be no more than 5 feet from the shelf.
    b. NASA will provide standard US NEMA 5-15 type, 110 VAC, 60 Hz electrical connections in the Mission Control Center for each team.
    c. The team must provide any conversion devices needed to interface team access points or Mission Control Center computers or devices with the provided power sources.
4. During the setup phase, the teams will set up their access point and verify communication with their mining robot from the Mission Control Center.
5. The teams must use the USA IEEE 802.11b, 802.11g, or 802.11n standards for their wireless connection (WAP and rover client).
    a. Teams cannot use multiple channels for data transmission, meeting this rule will require a spectral mask or “maximum bandwidth setting” of 20MHz bandwidth for all 2.4 GHz transmission equipment.
    b. Encryption is not required, but it is highly encouraged to prevent unexpected problems with team links.
    c. During a match, one team will operate on channel 1 and the other team will operate on channel 11. See Figure 2. These channels will be monitored during the competition by NASA to assure there are no other teams transmitting on the assigned team frequency.
6. Channels will be assigned via email prior to the competition or when the teams check in with the Pit crew chief.
7. Each team will be assigned an SSID that they must use for the wireless equipment for channels 1 and 11.
    a. SSID will be “Team_##.”
    b. Teams are required to broadcast their SSID.



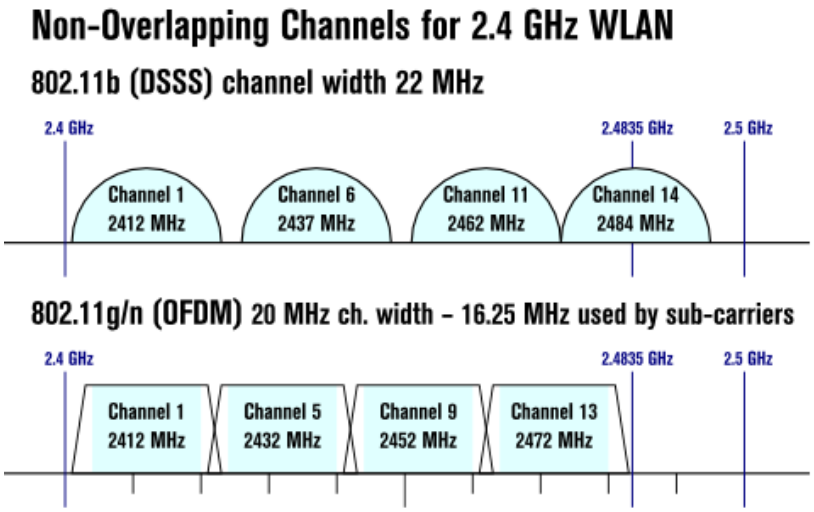


Figure 2: 802.11 n channels

8. The use of specific low power Bluetooth transmission equipment in the 2.4 GHz range is allowed for sensors and other robot communications. Bluetooth is allowed only at power levels of Classes 2 3, and are limited to a maximum transmit power of 2.5 mW EIRP. Class 1 Bluetooth devices are not allowed.
9. The use of 2.4 GHz ZigBee technology is prohibited because of the possibility of interference with the competition wireless transmissions.
10. Technology that uses other ISM non-licensed radio frequencies outside of the 2.4 GHz range, such as 900 MHz and 5 GHz, are ALLOWED to be used for any robot or sensor systems, but these frequencies will NOT be monitored during the competition. Interference avoidance will be the responsibility of the Team and will not be grounds for protest by any team.
11. Radio frequency power:
    a. All Team provided wireless equipment shall operate legally within the power requirements power levels set by the FCC for Unlicensed Wireless equipment operating in the ISM radio band. The FCC Federal Regulations are specified in the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations, Title 47, Telecommunication, Part 15, and must be followed if any commercial equipment is modified. All unmodified commercial off the shelf access point equipment and computers already meet this requirement.
    b. If a team inserts any type of power amplification device into the wireless transmission system, this will likely create a violation of FCC rules and is NOT allowed in the competition.
    c. This radio frequency power requirement applies to all wireless transmission devices at any ISM frequency.

B. BANDWIDTH CONSTRAINTS: A team will be awarded the Efficient Use of Communications Power Award for using the lowest average bandwidth during the timed and NASA-monitored portion of the competition. Teams must collect the minimum BP-1 and/or icy regolith simulant (gravel) to qualify for this award.

1. Use of the NASA provided Situational Awareness Camera in the control room will add 120 Megabits (Mb) of data use for all teams. If a team elects to turn off the joystick controlled situational awareness camera during the entire match, they will not be charged for the 120 Mb of data use. If the team elects to turn on the camera during the match, they will be charged for the full 120 MB of data use.
2. The communications link is required to have an average bandwidth of no more than 5 megabits per second. There will not be a peak bandwidth limit.

C. RF & COMMUNICATIONS APPROVAL

1. Each team must demonstrate to the communication judges that their mining robot and access point are operating only on their assigned channel. Each team will have approximately 15 minutes at the communication judges' station.
2. To successfully pass the communication judges' station, a team must drive their mining robot by commanding it from their mining robot driving/control laptop through their wireless access point. The judges will verify the course of travel and verify that the team is operating only on their assigned channel.
3. The teams must identify and show to the judges all the wireless emission equipment on the robot, including amplifiers and antennas. If the team has added an amplifier, written documentation shall be submitted to the judges demonstrating that the limits as designated in these rules for power transmission levels are not being exceeded.
4. If the team robot is transmitting low power Bluetooth, or is using any non-2.4 GHz frequency equipment, the following information must be provided to the judges during the communications checkout.
    a. Printed documentation from the manufacture with part numbers of all wireless transmission equipment. This printout must be from the manufacturer's data sheet or manual, and will designate the technology, frequency, and power levels in use by this type of equipment.
5. If a team cannot demonstrate the above tasks in the allotted time, the team will be disqualified from the competition.
6. On Monday, May 18, 2015, on a first-come, first-serve basis, the teams will be able to show the communication judges their compliance with the rules.
7. The NASA communications technical experts will be available to help teams make sure that they are ready for the communication judges' station on Monday, May 18, 2015, and Tuesday, May 19, 2015.
8. Once the team arrives at the communication judges' station, the team can no longer receive assistance from the NASA communications technical experts.
9. If a team is on the wrong channel during their competition attempts, the team will be disqualified and required to power down.

D. WIRELESS DEVICE OPERATION IN THE PITS

1. Teams will not be allowed to power up their transmitters on any frequency in the Pits during the practice matches or competition attempts. All teams must have a hard-wired connection for testing in the Pits.
2. Teams will have designated times to power up their transmitters when no matches are underway.

24) The mining robot must be contained within 1.5 m length x 0.75 m width x 0.75 m height. The mining robot may deploy or expand beyond the 1.5 m x 0.75 m footprint after the start of each competition attempt, but may not exceed a 1.5 meter height. During regolith simulant dumping operations only, the mining robot may deploy itself and exceed 1.5 m in height, but must be lower than the height of the ceiling of the tent, which is less than 2.5 m above the surface of the regolith. The mining robot may not pass beyond the confines of the outside wall of the Caterpillar Mining Arena and the Collector Bin during each competition attempt to avoid potential interference with the surrounding tent. The team must declare the orientation of length and width to the inspection judge. Because of actual Martian hardware requirements, no ramps of any kind will be provided or allowed. An arrow on the reference point must mark the forward direction of the mining robot in the starting position configuration. The judges will use this reference point and arrow to orient the mining robot in the randomly selected direction and position. A multiple mining robot system is allowed but the total mass and starting dimensions of the whole system must comply with the volumetric dimensions given in this rule.

25) To ensure that the mining robot is usable for an actual Martian mission, the mining robot cannot employ any fundamental physical processes, gases, fluids or consumables that would not work in the Martian environment. For example, any dust removal from a lens or sensor must employ a physical process that would be suitable for the Martian surface. Teams may use processes that require an Earth-like environment (e.g., oxygen, water) only if the system using the processes is designed to work in a Martian environment and if such resources used by the mining robot are included in the mass of the mining robot. Closed pneumatic mining systems are allowed only if the gas is supplied by the mining robot itself. Pneumatic mining systems are permitted if the gas is supplied by the robot and self-contained. Note: the mining robot will be exposed to outside air temperatures averaging 90 degrees Fahrenheit during inspection and while waiting to enter the Caterpillar Mining Arena.

26) Components (i.e. electronic and mechanical) are not required to be space qualified for Martian atmospheric, electromagnetic, and thermal environments. Since budgets are limited, the competition rules are intended to require mining robots to show Martian plausible system functionality but the components do not have to be traceable to a Martian qualified component version. Examples of allowable components are: Sealed Lead-Acid (SLA) or Nickel Metal Hydride (NiMH) batteries; composite materials; rubber or plastic parts; actively fan cooled electronics; motors with brushes; infrared sensors, inertial measurement units, and proximity detectors and/or Hall Effect sensors, but proceed at your own risk since the BP-1 is very dusty. Teams may use honeycomb structures as long as they are strong enough to be safe. Teams may not use GPS, rubber pneumatic tires; air/foam filled tires; open or closed cell foam, ultrasonic proximity sensors; or hydraulics because NASA does not anticipate the use of these on a Mars mission.

27) The mining robot may not use any process that causes the physical or chemical properties of the BP-1 and/or gravel to be changed or otherwise endangers the uniformity between competition attempts.

28) The mining robot may not penetrate the BP-1 surface with more force than the weight of the mining robot before the start of each competition attempt.

29) No ordnance, projectile, far-reaching mechanism (adhering to Rule 24), etc. may be used. The mining robot must move on the BP-1 surface.

30) No team can intentionally harm another team's mining robot. This includes radio jamming, denial of service to network, BP-1 manipulation, ramming, flipping, pinning, conveyance of current, or other forms of damage as decided upon by the judges. Immediate disqualification will result if judges deem any maneuvers by a team as being offensive in nature. Erratic behavior or loss of control of the mining robot as determined by the judges will be cause for immediate disqualification. A judge may disable the mining robot by pushing the red emergency stop button at any time.

31) Teams must electronically submit documentation containing a description of their mining robot, its operation, potential safety hazards, a diagram, and basic parts list by April 30, 2015 at 12:00 p.m. (noon) eastern time.

32) Teams must electronically submit a **link** to their YouTube video documenting no less than 30 seconds but no more than 5 minutes of their mining robot in operation for at least one full cycle of operation by April 30, 2015 at 12:00 p.m. (noon) eastern time via e-mail to Bethanne.Hull@nasa.gov. One full cycle of operations includes excavation and depositing material. This video documentation is solely for technical evaluation of the mining robot.

Shipping

33) **Plan ahead for shipping your mining robot and its battery(s) as some batteries may not be allowed on board airplanes or in shipping containers.** Teams may ship their mining robots to **arrive no earlier than May 11, 2015**. The mining robots will be held in a safe, non air-conditioned area and be placed in each team's Space Pit by Monday, May 18, 2015. The **ship to** address is:

Transportation Officer, NASA
Central Supply, Bldg M6-744
Kennedy Space Center, FL 32899
M/F: KSC Visitor Complex, NASA's Robotic Mining Competition, M/C: DNPS

Note: Do not have the shipping company deliver the mining robot directly to the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex. They do not have facilities to store them until the Pits are set up. The shipper will come to the Pass & ID facility right before the Kennedy Space Center gate on State Road 405. Central Receiving will send an escort.

34) Return shipping arrangements must be made prior to the competition. Teams must submit their Shipping Bill of Lading/Commercial Invoice by April 30, 2015. All mining robots must be picked up from the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex **no later than 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 27, 2015**. Any abandoned mining robots will be discarded after this date. The **return** shipping address is:

Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex
Robotic Mining Shipping Area
Mail Code: DNPS
State Road 405
Kennedy Space Center, FL 32899

Caterpillar Mining Arena Diagrams

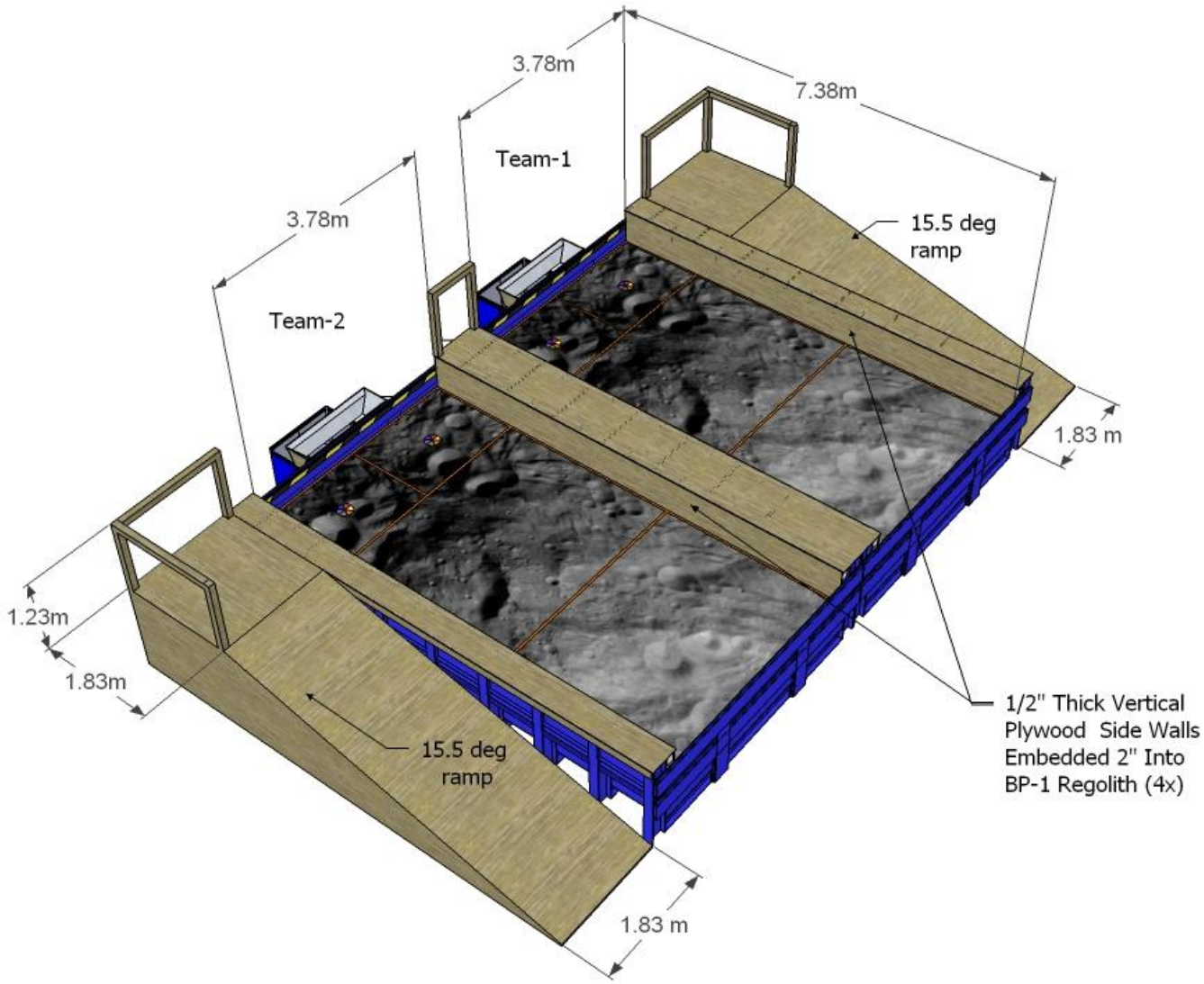


Diagram 1: Caterpillar Mining Arena (isometric view)

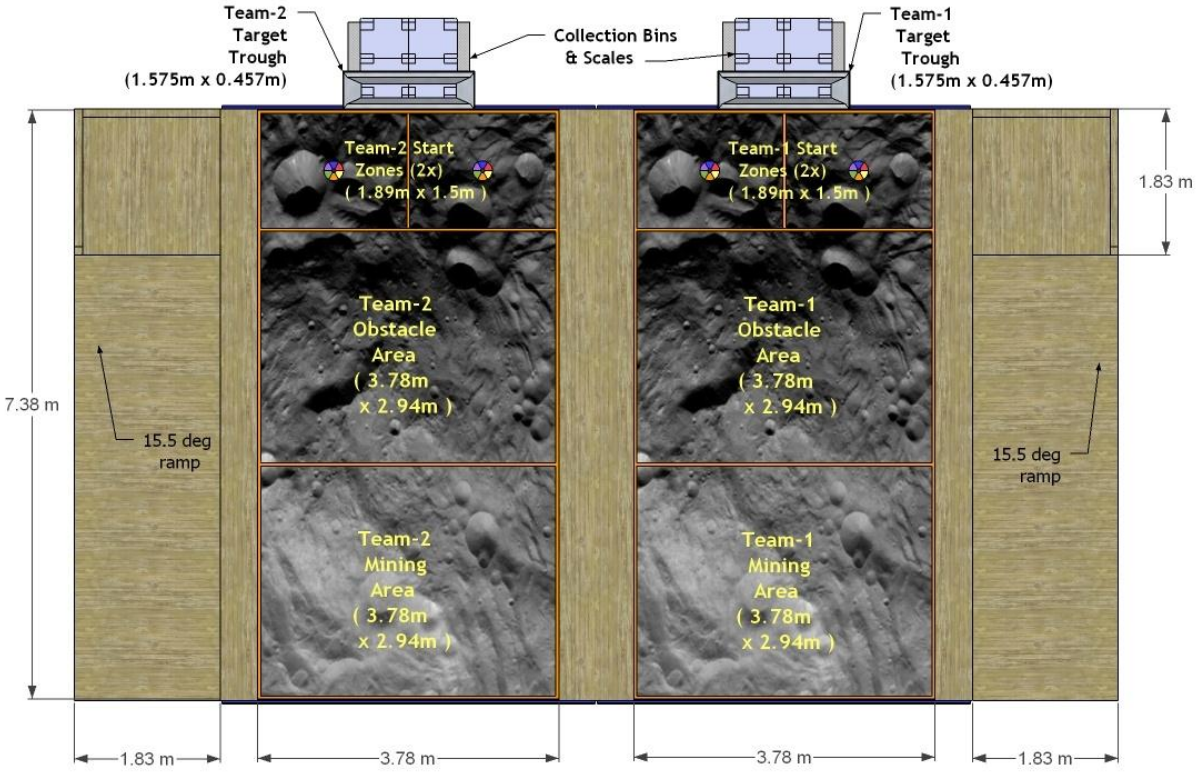


Diagram 2: Caterpillar Mining Arena (top view)

Collector Bin Diagram

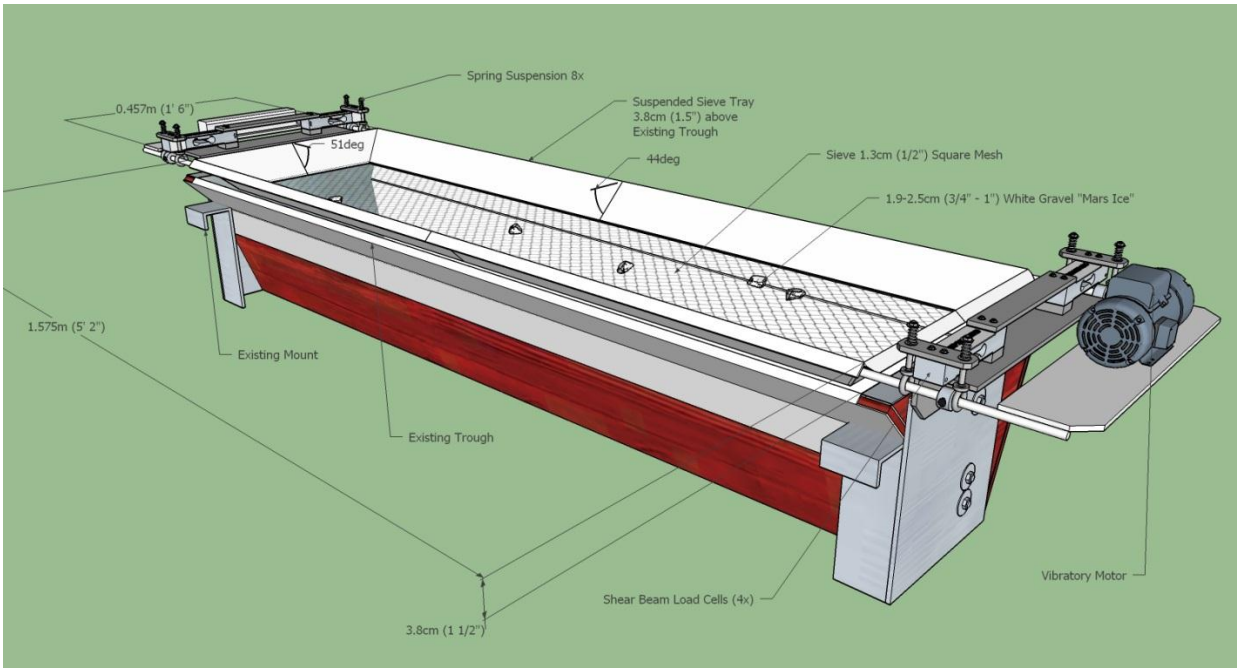


Diagram 3: Collector Bin

NASA's Robotic Mining Competition Systems Engineering Paper

Each team must submit a Systems Engineering Paper electronically in PDF by April 13, 2015 at 12:00 p.m. (noon) eastern time. Your paper should discuss the Systems Engineering methods used to design and build your mining robot. The purpose of the systems engineering paper is to encourage the teams to use the systems engineering process while designing, building and testing their robot as opposed to writing a paper after the fact. All pertinent information required in the rubric must be in the body of the paper. A minimum score of 16 out of 20 possible points must be achieved to qualify to win in this category. In the case of a tie, the judges will choose the winning Systems Engineering Paper. The judges' decision is final. The team with the winning Systems Engineering Paper will receive a team plaque, individual certificates, and a $500 team scholarship. Second and third place winners will receive certificates.

For reference, undergraduate course materials in NASA Systems Engineering, are available at www.spacese.spacegrant.org.

NASA's Robotic Mining Competition Systems Engineering Paper Scoring Rubric	
Elements	**Points**
Content: • Formatted professionally, clearly organized, correct grammar and spelling, size 12 font; single spaced, maximum of 20 pages not including the cover, table of contents, and source pages. Appendices are allowed and limited to 5 pages, and should referenced in main body. Cover page must include: team name, title of paper, full names of all team members, university name, and faculty advisor's full name. • Title page must include the signature of the sponsoring faculty advisor and a statement that he/she has read and reviewed the paper prior to submission to NASA. • Purpose Statement must be included and related to the application of systems engineering to NASA's Robotic Mining Competition.	There are 3 points for 3 elements.
Intrinsic Merit: • Cost budget (estimated costs vs. actual costs) • Design philosophy in the context of systems engineering; discuss what your team is optimizing in your design approach (light weight? automation? BP-1 capacity? ice simulant, etc.) • Schedule of work from inception to arrival at competition • Major reviews: system requirements, preliminary design and critical design	There are 4 points for 4 elements. Up to 2 additional points may be awarded for exceptional work related to systems engineering intrinsic merit, for a total of 6 points.
Technical Merit: • Concept of operations • System hierarchy • Interfaces • Requirements • Technical budgets (mass, power & data allocated to components vs. actual mass, power, & data usage) • Trade-off assessments • Reliability • Verification of system meeting requirements	There are 8 points for 8 elements. Up to 3 additional points may be awarded for exceptional work related to systems engineering technical merit, for a total of 11 points.

NASA's Robotic Mining Competition Outreach Project Report

Each team must participate in an educational outreach project in their local community. Outreach examples include actively participating in school career days, science fairs, technology fairs, extracurricular science or robotics clubs, or setting up exhibits in local science museums or a local library. Other ideas include organizing a program with a Boys and Girls Club, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, etc. Teams are encouraged to have fun with the outreach project and share knowledge of NASA's Robotic Mining Competition, engineering or Martian activities with the local community.

Each team must submit a report of the Outreach Project electronically in PDF by April 13, 2015 at 12:00 p.m. (noon) eastern time. A minimum score of 16 out of 20 possible points must be achieved to qualify to win in this category. In the case of a tie, the judges will choose the winning outreach project. The judges' decision is final. The team with the winning outreach project report will receive a team plaque, individual certificates, and a $500 team scholarship. Second and third place winners will receive certificates.

NASA's Robotic Mining Competition Outreach Project Report Scoring Rubric	
Elements	**Points**
Structure, Content and Intrinsic Merit: • Formatted professionally, clearly organized, correct grammar and spelling, size 12 font; single spaced, maximum of 5 pages not including the cover. Appendices are not allowed, however, a link in the body of the report to a multimedia site with additional photos or videos is allowed. Cover page must include: team name, title of paper, full names of all team members, university name and faculty advisor's full name. • Purpose for this outreach project, identify outreach recipient group(s). • Illustrations must appropriately demonstrate the outreach project.	There are 3 points for 3 elements. Up to 2 additional points may be awarded for exceptional work related to outreach intrinsic merit, for a total of 5 points.
Educational Outreach Merit: • The report must effectively describe what the outreach activity(s) was. • The report must describe exactly how the Robotic Mining Competition team participated. • The report must reflect how the outreach project inspired others to learn about robotics, engineering or Martian activities. • The report must demonstrate the quality of the outreach including how hands-on activities were used to engage the audience at their level of understanding. • The report must show statistics on the participants. Examples include an in-depth or long term outreach project or follow-up with the participants.	There are 10 points for 5 elements. Up to 5 additional points may be awarded for exceptional work related to educational outreach merit, for a total of 15 points.

NASA's Robotic Mining Competition Slide Presentation and Demonstration

The Robotic Mining Slide Presentation and Demonstration is an optional category in the overall competition. The presentation and demonstration must be no more than 20 minutes with an additional 5 minutes for questions and answers. It will be judged at the competition in front of an audience including NASA and private industry judges. The presentations must be submitted electronically in PDF by April 13, 2015 at 12:00 p.m. (noon) eastern time. Teams **MUST** present the slides turned in on April 13th. Visual aids, such as videos and handouts, may be used during the presentation but videos must be presented using the team's own laptop. You may NOT update/modify your slide presentation and present it from your laptop. A minimum score of 16 out of 20 possible points must be achieved to qualify to win in this category. The content, formatting and illustration portion of the score will be judged prior to the live presentation and scored based on the presentation turned in on April 13th. In the case of a tie, the judges will choose the winning presentation. The judges' decision is final. The team with the winning presentation will receive a team plaque, individual team certificates, and a $500 team scholarship. Second and third place winners will receive certificates.

NASA's Robotic Mining Competition Slide Presentation and Demonstration Scoring Rubric	
Elements	**Points**
Content, formatting, and illustrations: • Content includes a cover slide (with team name, presentation title, names of team members, university name, and faculty advisor's name). Also includes an introduction slide and referenced sources. • Formatting is readable and aesthetically pleasing with proper grammar and spelling. • Illustrations support the technical content • Illustrations show progression of the project and final design	There are 4 points for 4 elements. Up to 2 additional points may be awarded for exceptional slides, for a total of 6 points.
Technical Merit: • Design Process • Design Decisions • Final Design • Mining robot functionality • Special features - highlight what makes the mining robot unique or innovative	There are 5 points for 5 elements. Up to 2 additional points may be awarded for exceptional work related to technical merit, for a total of 7 points.
Presentation: • Handles slides and equipment professionally • Engages audience and infuses personality • Creative and inspirational • Demonstrates Robot • Answers questions	There are 5 points for 5 elements. Up to 2 additional points may be awarded for an exceptional presentation, for a total of 7 points.

NASA's Robotic Mining Competition Team Spirit

NASA's Robotic Mining Competition Team Spirit is an optional category in the overall competition. A minimum score of 12 out of 15 possible points must be achieved to qualify to win in this category. In the case of a tie, the judges will choose the winning team. The judges' decision is final. The team winning the Team Spirit Award at the competition will receive a team plaque, individual certificates, and a $500 team scholarship. Second and third place winners will receive certificates.

NASA's Robotic Mining Competition Team Spirit Competition Scoring Rubric				
Elements	**3**	**2**	**1**	**0**
Teamwork: • Exhibits teamwork in the Caterpillar Mining Arena, Sandbox, and Pits • Exhibits a strong sense of collaboration within the team • Supports other teams	Three elements are clearly demonstrated	Two elements are clearly demonstrated	One element is clearly demonstrated	Zero elements are demonstrated
Attitude: • Exudes a positive attitude in all interactions • Demonstrates an infectious energy by engaging others in group activities • Keeps pit clean and tidy at all times	Three elements are clearly demonstrated	Two elements are clearly demonstrated	One element is clearly demonstrated	Zero elements are demonstrated
Creativity & Originality: • Demonstrates creativity and originality in team activities, name, and logo • Wears distinctive team identifiers • Creatively promotes specific cultural and/or regional pride	Three elements are clearly demonstrated	Two elements are clearly demonstrated	One element is clearly demonstrated	Zero elements are demonstrated
Sportsmanship: • Demonstrates courtesy with authority & competitors • Demonstrates respect • Conducts themselves as positive role models	Three elements are clearly demonstrated	Two elements are clearly demonstrated	One element is clearly demonstrated	Zero elements are demonstrated

Categories & Awards

In addition to the awards listed below, school plaques and/or individual team certificates will be awarded for exemplary performance in the following categories:

Category	Required/ Optional	Due Dates	Award	Maximum Points toward Joe Kosmo Award for Excellence
On-site Mining in the Caterpillar Mining Arena	Required	May 20-22, 2015	First place $3,000 team scholarship and Kennedy launch invitations Second place $2,000 team scholarship and Kennedy launch invitations Third place $1,000 team scholarship and Kennedy launch invitations Teams not placing 1st, 2nd, or 3rd will receive one point per kilogram of BP-1 and/or icy regolith simulant (gravel) mined and deposited up to 10 points	25 20 15 Up to 10
Systems Engineering Paper	Required	April 13, 2015	$500 team scholarship	Up to 20
Outreach Project Report	Required	April 13, 2015	$500 team scholarship	Up to 20
Slide Presentation and Demonstration	Optional	April 13, 2015 and On-Site on May 20-22, 2015	$500 team scholarship	Up to 20
Team Spirit Competition	Optional	All Year	$500 team scholarship	Up to 15
Joe Kosmo Award for Excellence	Grand Prize for Most Points	All Year	A school trophy, $5,000 team scholarship and KSC launch invitations	Total of above points, maximum of 100 points possible
Judges' Innovation Award	Optional	May 20-22, 2015	A school trophy	
Efficient Use of Communications Power Award	Optional	May 20-22, 2015	A school trophy	
Caterpillar's Autonomy Award	Optional	May 20-22, 2015	First place $1,500 team scholarship Second place $750 team scholarship Third place $250 team scholarship	

NASA's Robotic Mining Competition Checklist

All documents are due by 12:00 p.m. (noon) eastern time.

Required Competition Elements

If required elements are not received by the due dates, then the team is not eligible to compete in any part of the competition (NO EXCEPTIONS).

☐ Registration Application*****	50 teams are registered
☐ Systems Engineering Paper	Noon, April 13, 2015
☐ Outreach Project Report	Noon, April 13, 2015
☐ On-site Mining	May 20-22, 2015
○ Team Check-in, Unload/Uncrate mining robot	May 18, 2015 by 3:00 p.m.
○ Practice Days	May 18-19, 2015
○ Competition Days	May 20-22, 2015
○ Awards Ceremony	May 22, 2015 (evening)

Optional Competition Elements

☐ Presentation File	Noon, April 13, 2015
☐ Team Spirit	All year

Required Documentation

☐ Letter of Support from lead university's Faculty Advisor	With Competition Application
☐ Letter of Support from lead university's Dean of Engineering	December 1, 2014
☐ Team Roster	December 1, 2014
☐ Student Participant Form	December 1, 2014
☐ Faculty Participation Form	December 1, 2014
☐ Transcripts (unofficial copy is acceptable)******	December 1, 2014
☐ Signed Media Release Form	December 1, 2014
☐ Team Photo including faculty (high resolution .jpg format preferred)	January 19, 2015
☐ Team Biography (200 words maximum)	January 19, 2015
☐ Corrections to NASA generated Team Roster	February 24, 2015
☐ Head Count Form	February 24, 2015
☐ Revised Team Roster (no changes accepted after this date)	March 24, 2015
☐ Rule 31 documentation	April 30, 2015
☐ Rule 32 video	April 30, 2015
☐ Rule 34 Shipping Bill of Lading/Commercial Invoice	April 30, 2015

***** Registration is limited to the first 50 approved U.S. teams. Registration is limited to one team per university campus. Registration will end when NASA approves 50 applications.

****** Each student's Transcript must be from the university and show:

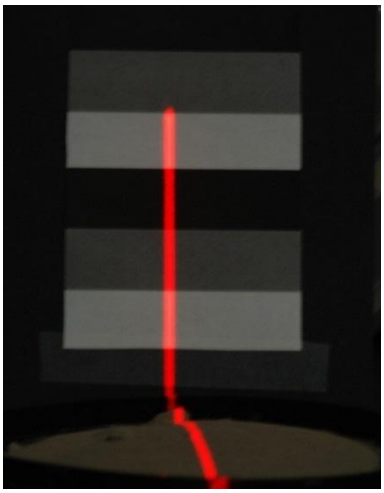
- name of university
- name of student
- current student status within the 2014-2015 academic year
- coursework taken and grades

Definitions

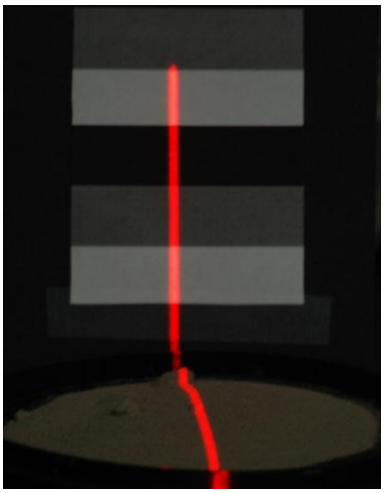
Autonomous – The operation of a team's mining robot with no human interaction.

Black Point-1 (BP-1) – A crushed lava basalt aggregate which is similar to Mars Volcanic Ash. The BP-1 will be compacted with a fluffy top layer similar to the Martian surface. However, it does not behave like sand. The study on BP-1 is available on http://www.nasa.gov/nasarmc. Also, watch the Lunabotics Webcast where Dr. Philip Metzger, a NASA Physicist, describes BP-1 and its behavior. It is available at http://youtu.be/hMfrv7mlxbE. The density of the compacted BP-1 aggregate will be between 1.5 g/cm^3 and 1.8 g/cm^3. The top will be raked to a fluffy condition of approximately .75 g/cm^3. There are naturally occurring rocks in the BP-1 aggregate. The coefficient of friction has not been measured for BP-1. BP-1 behaves like a silty powder soil and most particles are under 100 microns diameter. The coefficient of friction and the cohesion of Martian soil have not been precisely measured due to a lack of scientific data from Mars. Instead, they have been estimated via a variety of techniques. Both parameters (coefficient of friction and cohesion) are highly dependent on the compaction (bulk density, porosity) of the Martian soil. Since the properties of Mars regolith vary and are not well known, this competition will assume that Martian basaltic regolith properties are similar to the Lunar regolith as stated in the Lunar Sourcebook: A User's Guide to the Moon, edited by G. H. Heiken, D. T. Vaniman, and B. M. French, copyright 1991, Cambridge University Press. Teams are encouraged to develop or procure simulants based on basaltic minerals and lunar surface regolith particle size, shape, and distribution. BP-1 is not commercially available and it is made from crushed basalt fines. However, JSC-1A is available from Orbital Technologies at: http://www.orbitec.com/store/simulant.html and NU-LHT is commercially available from Zybek Advanced Products (ZAP) at: http://www.zybekap.com/.

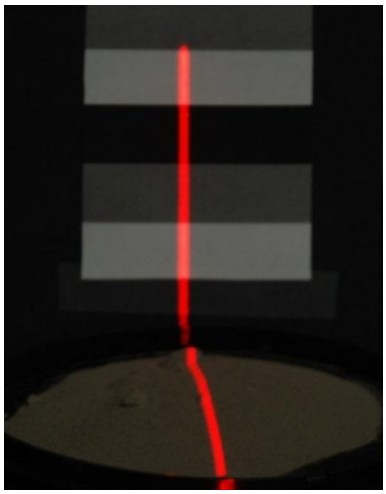
BP-1 reflectivity – NASA performed tests to answer questions about BP-1 reflectivity for LIDAR (or other LASER-based) navigation systems. The laser is not a beam – it is spread out as a sheet that is oriented in the vertical direction, so it is draped across the BP-1 and across a white/gray/black target that is standing up behind the BP-1 in the images. The BP-1 is the mound at the bottom of each image. Teams can get the reflectivity of the BP-1 by comparing the brightness of the laser sheet seen reflected from the BP-1 with the brightness of the same sheet reflected from the white and black portions of the target. The three images are for the three angles of the laser. Note the BP-1 is mounded so they need to account for the fact that it is not a flat surface if they choose to analyze the brightness in the images. The three pictures below were shot with the camera at 10, 16, and 21 degrees relative to the surface. The laser was at an angle of 15 degrees. The camera speed and aperture were set to (manual mode): 1/8 s, f/4.5.



10 degree



16 degree



21 degree

Caterpillar Mining Arena – An open-topped container (i.e., a box with a bottom and 4 side walls), containing BP-1, within which the mining robot will perform each competition attempt. The inside dimensions of the each side of the Caterpillar Mining Arena will be 7.38 meters long and 3.88 meters wide, and 1 meter in depth. The BP-1 aggregate will be approximately .3 meters in depth and approximately .5 meters from the top of the walls to the surface. There is no guarantee that the BP-1 in the mining arena will have a level surface, since planetary surfaces are random and chaotic. Be prepared for slopes, irregularities and small rocks in the BP-1 simulant surface. The Caterpillar Mining Arena for the practice days and official competition will be provided by NASA. The Caterpillar Mining Arena will be outside in an enclosed tent. The Caterpillar Mining Arena lighting will consist of high intensity discharge (HID) lights such as metal halide lights inside a tent structure with clear sides, which is not quite as bright as outdoor daylight conditions. The atmosphere will be an air-conditioned tent without significant air currents and cooled to approximately 77 degrees Fahrenheit. See Diagrams 1 – 3. The Caterpillar Mining Arena steel, primer and paint specifications are as follows:

1. Steel: A-36(walls) & A-992(I-beams) structural steel
2. Primer: Devran 201 epoxy primer, 2.0 to 3.0 mils, Dry Film Thickness (DFT)
3. Paint: Blue Devthane 379 polyurethane enamel, 2.0 to 3.0 mils, DFT (per coat)

Collector Bin – A Collector Bin in the Caterpillar Mining Arena for each competition attempt into which each team will deposit excavated BP-1. The Collector Bin will be large enough to accommodate each team's excavated BP-1. The Collector Bin will be stationary and located adjacent to the Caterpillar Mining Arena. See Diagram 3.

Competition attempt – The operation of a team's mining robot intended to meet all the requirements for winning the mining category by performing the functional task. The duration of each competition attempt is 10-minutes.

Excavated mass – Mass of the excavated BP-1 deposited to the Collector bin by the team's mining robot during each competition attempt, measured in kilograms (kg) with official result recorded to the nearest one tenth of a kilogram (0.1 kg).

Functional task – The excavation of BP-1 and/or icy regolith simulant from the Caterpillar Mining Arena by the mining robot and deposit of BP-1 icy regolith simulant from the mining robot into the Collector Bin.

Gravel - This is intended to simulate icy-regolith buried on Mars. The gravel will be approximately 2 cm in diameter (minimum size) but will have random particle sizes larger than that also mixed into the gravel. The gravel may be mixed in with the BP-1 in small quantities, but the majority of the gravel will be on the approximately lower 30 cm of the mining area regolith depth only. The gravel will be made of a hard rock material, and will not have a specific color.

Mining robot – A teleoperated or autonomous robotic excavator in the Robotic Mining Competition including mechanical and electrical equipment, batteries, gases, fluids and consumables delivered by a team to compete in the competition.

Mining points – Points earned from the two competition attempts in the Robotic Mining Competition will be averaged to determine ranking in the on-site mining category.

Practice time – Teams will be allowed to practice with their mining robots in the Caterpillar Mining Arena. NASA technical experts will offer feedback on real-time networking performance during practice attempt. A maximum of two practice attempts will be allowed, but not guaranteed.

Reference point – A fixed location signified by an arrow showing the forward direction on the mining robot that will serve to verify the starting orientation of the mining robot within the Caterpillar Mining Arena.

Telerobotic – Communication with and control of the mining robot during each competition attempt must be performed solely through the provided communications link which is required to have a total average bandwidth of no more than 5.0 megabits/second on all data and video sent to and received from the mining robot.

Time Limit – 10 minutes to set up the mining robot in the Caterpillar Mining Arena, 10 minutes for the mining robot to perform the functional task, and 5 minutes to remove the mining robot.